

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, June 13, 1996

Published Since 1877

Pearl River BSU'ers learn value of service at home, abroad

By Morris Baker

"Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God."

Missionary William Carey spoke those words centuries ago, but their challenge still applies today. Recently, 18 students and four adults from the Pearl River Community College (PRCC) Baptist Student Union (BSU) embraced this challenge as they participated in a mission project in El Progreso, Honduras, May 19-25.

The challenge of expecting God to do great things actually began several months prior to the trip, as students learned of the expense involved. Their expectations of God's greatness were realized as the entire cost of the trip was funded through individual

and/or church contributions!

We landed in San Pedro Sula, where we were met by Pat and Ruth Rogers, a retired couple from Jackson who work in Honduras through the Partnership Missions Office of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. The Rogerses handled all of the logistical arrangements for the project, as well as served as excellent missions role models.

Our project centered around personal evangelism and ministry to children and youths. Working through Bethany Baptist Church, pastored by Misael Marriaga, our team members led worship services and children's activities at Bethany and Mt. Zion Baptist

Church (a mission of Bethany). We also spent one day ministering in similar ways at Macedonia Baptist Church in Santa Rita, a church established by Mississippi missionary Stanley Stamps.

The mornings were devoted to children's and youth ministry in five different schools, only one of which was English-speaking. Through the use of dramas, good interpreters, and bilingual puppet songs, the BSU students were able to record 15 professions of faith.

Our group observed how well-mannered the Honduran students are, even though they are forced to learn in quite modest settings. We also noticed the irony of presenting the gospel message in public schools in Honduras, while being unable to do the same at many schools in the U.S.

In the afternoons our BSU team participated in door-to-door evangelistic encounters under the leadership of Mt. Zion Church. Using bilingual tracts and interpreters, the students were able to witness in many homes. Through this activity, our students gained confidence in giving their testimonies and sharing their faith.

By week's end, we had ministered to over 600 children and youths, distributed more than 1,000 Spanish Bibles and New Testaments, and recorded 42 conversions. All of our participants were left with a deeper appreciation for the ongoing work of foreign missionaries.

Baker is BSU director at PRCC in Poplarville.



Ryan Smith (left) and Alicia Archer (right) clown around with children at Parkview Church, Picayune. Smith and Archer participated in a joint children's ministry project of the Pearl River Community College Baptist Student Union, Parkview Church, and Pearl River Association this spring.



Marilyn Moore (center) takes a break with children at Macedonia Baptist Church in Santa Rita, Honduras. Moore is one of 18 Pearl River Community College Baptist Student Union members who participated in a week-long mission effort in the Central American country in May.

This spring, 32 Baptist Student Union (BSU) students from Pearl River Community College (PRCC) in Poplarville teamed up with Parkview Church, Picayune, for a special ministry to children and youths.

Located in a trailer park, Parkview Church was eager to begin a children's ministry, but lacked the personnel. The church's music minister, Jim Futrell, approached Ken Rhodes, director of missions for Pearl River Association, for help.

Rhodes in turn contacted Morris Baker, PRCC BSU director. The two met with Futrell in November, selected teaching materials, goals, and scheduled a February launch date. BSU students committed to lead in recreation, crafts, Bible study, and music for two hours every Wednesday through April.

"The initial response of the students was overwhelming," said Baker. "... We had to divide them into three teams (of 10-11 each) and set up a rotation schedule."

Using "Team 1" children's song materials and "Right from Wrong" materials for teaching, the BSU students ministered to approximately 30 children each week.

"We couldn't have done this without the help of the BSU," said Rhodes. "The students have been involved in our church since they were young."

The sentencing in Oxford last week of a 48-year-old Satanist who forced an impressionable Monroe County teenager into truck-stop prostitution should serve as a wake-up call that devil worship is alive and well among Mississippi teens. "If Satanists could be characterized in one term, it would be 'self-serving.' One's needs, desires, beliefs, and goals are supreme," said Charles Rice, dean of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College in Stanford, Ky., and an occult researcher. Christian parents should stop believing their children aren't at risk from such predators, he pointed out. "Denial is Satan's greatest tool of deceit," he said. The culture of today's American children often persuades them to question their values and confuses them about right and wrong, Rice said. Teens simply don't realize that engaging in such activities as astrology, Tarot cards, and palm reading is "playing with Satan," he stressed. "Early help and intervention is essential. Get involved in your teen's life," Rice said. He suggested that parents be proactive rather than reactive by engaging their children in discussions about good and evil, and analyzing the cultural messages they receive. "Does it honor God or Satan or self-centeredness?" he asked.

Southern Baptist missionaries Clif and Laurie Ingram found a way to make Bornem, Belgium, a sweeter place for the gospel. On Valentine's Day 1996, the couple handed out 600 boxes of chocolate to residents of the northern Belgium town, each carrying the words, "God loves you," on the top of the box. "We simply told them we appreciated the services they provided to the community and wanted to give them a Valentine's gift. The response seemed to be quite positive," Clif said. Inside the chocolate boxes was the question, "What is love?" followed by the words of John 3:16 and the name of the Ingrams' church. Evangelicals make up less than 1% of the population of Belgium, where over 90% of the citizens call themselves Roman Catholics but only 10% take part in any church activities. "As we cut out, folded, and filled 600 boxes, we couldn't help thinking that seminary never prepared us for this kind of evangelism," Clif said. The few hundred Baptists who live in Belgium are not officially recognized by the government, which means they pay higher taxes and have fewer privileges than Catholics. The Ingrams hope their unique brand of evangelism will help Belgians understand that Baptists are a people with a message worth hearing.

Looking Back...

10 years ago

The Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), meeting in Atlanta prior to the opening of the 1986 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting, elects Pattie Dent of Holly Springs as recording secretary for the SBC auxiliary. Dent is a former Mississippi WMU president.

20 years ago

Baptist-affiliated William Carey College offers its newly-purchased Gulf Coast campus to the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board for summer use until reconstruction is completed at Gulfshore Assembly, destroyed by Hurricane Camille in 1969.

50 years ago

Joe Hicks, son of pastor R.B. Hicks of Second Church, Calhoun City, pleads in a letter from his post-war military station in Yosu, Korea, for more Baptist missionaries to answer the need for the gospel in that country, which was only recently liberated from Japanese occupation.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

The pearl of great price

How can we know when our conduct is pleasing to the Lord? Is there a sure-fire way to tell?

"By their fruit ye shall know them," is great, but what kind of fruit? Have the criteria become so blurred through the ages; has the modern world tempered the message to a disagreeable lukewarmness?

The Master Teacher made it plain: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

This passage is considered to be the "farewell discourse" to the disciples. Only that of extreme importance would be voiced. Jesus called it a new commandment and the extent was to be obedience, even unto death.

The early church picked up on this theme and comments like, "Behold, how they love one another," were heard of it. The apostle Paul called the practice of love a "supremely excellent way."

Paul handled the love subject as a careful jeweler would show his most precious gem. He turned it

on every side, showing it in varied light, and holding it up so the viewer would know how valuable it is and have a desire for it.

Love can be judged by any standard, tried by any court, pressed by any circumstance, and the gem still sparkles. Oppression causes it to glow even more. Time bows before love, recognizing its lasting qualities. Even faith and hope — without which we cannot please God — will acknowledge the supreme quality of love.

It is with this light shining upon us in which our deeds will be judged. Never mind the eloquence, the generous spirit, even the sacrificial gifts, without love there is little value to be found.

Jerry Vardaman of Starkville, former professor of archeology at Mississippi State University, offered a refreshing view of this gem found in 1 Corinthians 13. He wrote:

"Love maintains control of passions, love is kind, love has no room for envy, love does not brag, love is not puffed up with pride, love does not behave dishonor-

ably, love does not conduct itself in self-seeking, love does not explode in anger, love does not plot evil, love never rejoices in the wrong but love always rejoices in truth.

"Love makes all things work out satisfactorily; and in all circumstances, love keeps on believing, love keeps on hoping, and love outlasts everything...."

This week the Southern Baptist Convention is meeting in New Orleans. If we desire true discipleship, then love ought to be foremost in everything. Speakers, teachers, editors, and all who name the Name of Christ, would do well to tarry long at the love altar where a word is spoken or a sentence is written.

Lovelace, in "To Lucasta, Going to the Wars," had his soldier saying:

"I could not love thee, Dear,
so much,
Lov'd I not honor more."

The truth is: the more we love Christ and draw near unto him, the more we are able to love one another.



Guest Opinion...

A daughter's tears stir Dad to see the value of "presence"

By Norman Jameson

THOMASVILLE, N.C. (BP) — Daddys work hard to keep wolves at bay who lurk howling and snapping at their families' doors.

Responsible dads pay the mortgage or rent to keep their families warm and dry. They find a way to keep the children fed and clothed and scrape up an extra dollar for a special treat now and then.

Parents wear the wheels off their cars to haul kids to dance, soccer and church functions, school play practices, and athletic events.

They try to jump start their children's careers by enrolling them in preschool and then buying the recommended books, tapes, and toys to help them do the best job of parenting.

If the children are threatened, dad takes action. He'll march into school to confront a teacher or principal who doesn't realize the man's child is the best student ever to grace the halls of that school.

He'll patrol the playground on foot and watch over the neighbor-

hood from his window. He'll storm out the door to turn away a bully or to kiss a skinned knee when the mean old bicycle falls down, taking his daughter to the sidewalk with it.

Though it's his least-favorite thing in the world, he'll spend an evening looking for a "first date" dress in every store in the mall. The shopping kills, but some wonderful daughter-dad secrets are revealed that could not be discovered through the foliage of any other hunt. When they learn together there's not a mutually acceptable dress in the entire mall, they share the disappointment.

When she learns to drive, he'll wrap on a neck support device and take her in the car for hours, teaching her to drive defensively and to avoid the roadway crazies.

Sometimes the hardest thing for a dad to do is set the limits. Dad knows his "nos" will unleash an immediate reaction that ranges from foot stomping to anger and harsh words about his inability to grasp how absolutely essential it is to say "yes."

Dads, who are "too old" to understand, don't know "everybody is going to be there" and that his own daughter will be cast into the depths of "nerdness" if she doesn't show.

But, dads do know and understand. And they know the right answers aren't often the easy answers. They can handle the hard task, the anger, the bully, the driving lessons, the saying "no."

What they can't handle is the tears.

Of course, daughters know that. They learn it from their mothers.

What course can an action-oriented father take when his daughter, surely the loveliest and brightest child in her school, sobs on the bed and declares she is ugly and dumb?

What course can he take when, through those tears, she declares the only boy she could ever love has jilted her for another? What action befits when those tears fall upon a letter of rejection from a college, or from a committee that declared she did not win an award?

THE FRAGMENTS

Editors and mercy

J.B. Gambrell, founder and first editor of **The Baptist Record**, made the following statement on March 30, 1882: "The 10 plagues of a newspaper office are bores, poets, cranks, rats, cockroaches, typographical errors, exchange fiends, book canvassers, delinquent subscribers, and the man who always knows how to run a paper better than the editor himself."

Things have changed at **The Baptist Record** in the 114 years since Gambrell penned his words. We still have the typographical errors, and it is an activated right of mankind for him to know more about any job than the man in office.

Although he sits on the bed where she lays sobbing, and holds her in his arms, what wrench can he apply on her faucet of tears to erase the names she was called in school? Or how can pliers crack the clique she desperately wants to join?

Falling tears and wrenching sobs, runny noses, and quivering lips paralyze a dad accustomed to finding solutions to make things right for his children. He feels helpless, vulnerable.

What action will make it bet-

However, good things about being an editor far outweigh any negative feature. Sure, there have been days when my favorite verse of Scripture was: "Blessed are the merciful", and I went around singing, "Come, Ye Disconsolate," but "There Is Sunshine in My Soul Today" would gradually surface.

A frustrated writer heard that George Bernard Shaw was being paid a dollar per word for his writing. Angriely, the writer sent Shaw a dollar and added a note: "Here's a dollar. Send me a word!"

Sometime later, the man received a card from Shaw. On it was written just one word: "Thanks." — GH

ter? Who can he call? Who can he hit? Who can he beg?

Logic will not prevail, only presence. She can be comforted, not by his answers where there are none, but by his presence when there is no one else.

Then he understands. Presence is what she needs most.

Jameson is director of communications for the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, Inc., based in Thomasville, and is editor of its periodical, *Charity & Children*.

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Strong missions giving makes missionary pay raise possible

By Mark Kelly

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Prompted by stronger giving from Southern Baptists, Foreign Mission Board (FMB) trustees approved an immediate missionary salary increase during their June 7-8 meeting in New Orleans.

Their action allocates \$1.4 million to upgrade raises based on length of service for the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) nearly 4,200 foreign missionaries working in 129 countries and among 336 ethnic people groups.

Meeting prior to the annual meeting of the SBC, trustees also allocated \$3.3 million from real estate sales in Hong Kong to meet high-priority missionary housing needs elsewhere in the world.

FMB President Jerry Rankin also challenged trustees to envision radically increasing the missionary force in countries of the

former Soviet bloc to capitalize on momentum building in Baptist work there.

Stronger than expected giving by Southern Baptist churches and a slightly lower than expected growth rate in missionary numbers freed resources needed to finance the missionary pay raise, according to Carl Johnson, FMB vice president for finance.

The trustees' vote gives increases ranging from \$408 to \$3,240 per year for missionaries at the five-, 10-, and 15-year cycles of service, beginning July 1.

"We've been saying we would give longevity raises to missionaries as soon as Southern Baptists increased their giving," said Avery Willis, senior vice president for overseas operations. "We've not been able to do that for a long time. This is a response

to Southern Baptist giving."

Final figures for the 1995 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions showed an increase of 3.59% over the previous year. Giving through the Cooperative Program, the Southern Baptist unified budget, is up 2.42% in the first eight months of the fiscal year. Contributions during May were up 25% over the

same period a year ago.

The move will encourage missionaries with long-term commitments to overseas service at the point where their family financial needs are growing, Willis said.

"We haven't been able to show our appreciation for those who are staying a long time," he said. "This will be a great encouragement to missionaries on the field,

some of whom are facing very difficult financial situations. It will be a new lease on life to many."

"This is a lesson in stewardship, like Jesus' parable of the talents," said John White III, associate vice president of overseas operations. "Buying those missionary houses proved to be a good investment, as well as a ministry necessity."

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

The Baptist Record

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Intercom prayer banned in N. Mississippi school

OXFORD (BP) — A federal judge has ruled a northern Mississippi school district violated the separation of church and state by allowing student-led prayer and Bible reading over an intercom system.

Judge Neal Biggers issued a permanent injunction June 3 ordering the school district not only to halt devotionals over the high school intercom at North Pontotoc Attendance Center but also to stop authorizing vocal prayers by elementary classes before going to the cafeteria for lunch and Bible history courses in Pontotoc County schools.

Biggers also banned the use in American history classes of three videos, including "America's Godly Heritage" by conservative Christian speaker/writer David Barton.

The case began in December 1994 when Lisa Herdahl filed suit against the school district for allowing such practices. Herdahl and her five children had moved from Wisconsin to the northeast Mississippi town of Ecru.

The trial in federal court was held in early March of this year.

While People for the American

Way and the American Civil Liberties Union assisted Herdahl in the case, Southern Baptists at the local and national level supported the school's position.

Michael Whitehead began assisting the school district while he was general counsel of the Christian Life Commission and continued to help after becoming a vice president at Midwestern Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., served as the school district's expert witness by providing testimony.

In his opinion, Biggers said, "The Bill of Rights was created to protect the minority from tyranny by the majority," according to an Associated Press report in *The Washington Times*.

Whitehead, who could not be reached for comment June 4, said before the trial, "This case is not about teacher-led or school-sponsored prayer. The school does not sponsor student speech just because it permits student speech. What the school sponsors in this forum is freedom."

Christian Life Commission President Richard Land said the

decision was "a mix of bad news and good news. Out of the five issues that were in dispute, the school district lost four out of the five, but the one that they won is extremely significant."

Biggers upheld the constitutionality of the school district allowing seventh- through 12th-grade students to meet in the gymnasium before school for prayer and Bible reading, Land said. The judge also said students in kindergarten through sixth grade may continue to attend the same meetings if they have written permission from their parents, Land said.

The significance of that ruling is "with the permission of written parental consent, this would potentially expand equal access from secondary schools all the way down to kindergarten in those large numbers of school districts where the elementary school children and secondary school children are in close physical proximity to each other," he said.

The Equal Access Act allows secondary school students to hold Bible club meetings on school property outside class hours when their school permits other clubs to meet.



Rankin retraces Lottie's steps

Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin began his exploration of the life and influence of Lottie Moon at Viewmont, the Moon family estate in Virginia's Albemarle County where the legendary Southern Baptist missionary was born. He followed Moon's footsteps all the way to China, where she spent four decades spreading the gospel until her death in 1912. Rankin recounts his trek — and reflects on the challenges facing missions today — in a new book, *A Journey of Faith and Sacrifice: Retracing the Steps of Lottie Moon*, just released by New Hope, publishing arm of Woman's Missionary Union, SBC. Collaborating with Rankin was award-winning photographer Don Rutledge, who produced more than 60 full-color portraits of "Lottie Moon country" in the United States and China for the hardback, coffee-table format book. (BP photo by Don Rutledge)

Mississippi churches increase gifts through CP 7%

Mississippi Baptists gave \$2,072,000 in 1995 to the Cooperative Program (CP), according to Bill Cansey, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, which distributed the funds.

The 1995 total of gifts through CP was up 7% from \$1,936,000 in 1994, or 0.89% more than the total given to CP in 1993. Compared to the 1990 total of \$1,500,000, CP gifts increased by \$672,000, or 4.47%.

CP gifts are voluntary offerings supporting Southern Baptist churches in Mississippi which fund missions and education programs in the United States and abroad, such as summer camps, the World's Fair, and the World's Christian Assembly at Camp Garaywa in China.

The CP also provides operating funds for the summer training program at Gulf Shore Assembly.

SBC CP gifts jump 2% over 1994

Not surprisingly, the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program (CP) gifts jumped 2% over 1994, according to a report released by the CP's National Office. The 1995 total of gifts through CP was \$2,072,000, up from \$2,036,000 in 1994. The 1995 total was also up 0.89% from the 1994 total of \$2,036,000. Compared to the 1990 total of \$1,500,000, CP gifts increased by \$572,000, or 3.81%.

At the time of the 1995 CP report, the CP's National Office had received \$2,333,000 more than the CP's National Office had received in 1994. Designated gifts for CP were up 2% from \$1,936,000 in 1994 to \$1,996,000 in 1995. Designated gifts were up 0.89% from the 1994 total of \$1,936,000. Compared to the 1990 total of \$1,500,000, CP gifts increased by \$496,000, or 3.31%.

For the SBC CP Allocation Budget, the May 1995 report showed a budget requirement of \$1,802,427. For the SBC budget, the May 1995 report showed a requirement of \$1,802,427. The 1995 total of gifts through CP was \$2,072,000, up from \$2,036,000 in 1994. The 1995 total was also up 0.89% from the 1994 total of \$2,036,000. Compared to the 1990 total of \$1,500,000, CP gifts increased by \$572,000, or 3.81%.



Six students with Mississippi ties received doctoral degrees from New Orleans Seminary during commencement services on May 17. Standing with Charles S. Kelley Jr., president (center), are (from left): Randall Broome of Sumrall, Walter (Chip) Henderson Jr. of Brandon, Greg Johnston of McComb, Ron Meeks of Corinth, Allen Simpson of Eupora, and Steven Stone of Jackson.

NOBTS grants degrees to 31 students with Mississippi connections

Six Mississippians received doctoral degrees from New Orleans Seminary during commencement exercises on May 17.

They were: Walter Eugene (Chip) Henderson Jr. of Brandon, pastor of Fair River Church, Brookhaven, doctor of philosophy; Randall Broome of Sumrall, doctor of ministry; Greg Harold Johnston of McComb, pastor of Escatawpa Church, Moss Point, doctor of ministry; Steven Ray Stone of Jackson, associate pastor of Broadmoor Church, Jackson, doctor of ministry; Allen Simpson of Eupora, pastor of Williamsville Church, Kosciusko, doctor of ministry; and Ronald T. Meeks of Corinth, associate pastor of Oakland Church, Corinth, doctor of philosophy.

Receiving the master of divinity degree during the same ceremony were: Eric Estes, youth minister of Summerland Church, Taylorsville; David M. Hartson III, pastor of Bala Chitto Church, Magnolia; Eddie Bullock, Houston, minister of youth at First Church, Belle Chasse, La.; David W. Aultman, Hattiesburg, pastor of Unity Church, Moselle; Stan D. Davis, Morton, minister to students of First Church, Picayune; James Edward Carson Jr., pastor of Mt. Hope Missionary Church, Canton; John (Mark) Byrd, Hattiesburg, pastor of Union Church, Mize; Russell (Rusty) C. Bird, West Point, pastor of Cruger Church, Cruger; Darby Combs, Roxie, pastor of Oak Grove Church, Benton; Clifton Adcock, Escatawpa; Kevin L. Jones, Forest, pastor of First Church, Soso; Richard A. Crews, Escatawpa, pastor of First Church, Sun, La.; Ray Cummings, Hattiesburg, minister of youth and recreation at First Church, Purvis; and David Edward Shoemaker, a graduate of Mississippi College, pastor of Greenlaw Church, Kentwood, La.

Receiving the master of arts in Christian education degree were: Rebecca Ann Brown (Becky), daughter of Don and Elsie Brown, Holly Springs, minister of music,

Elysian Fields Avenue Church, New Orleans; Elizabeth Hickman Gardner, wife of Jeffery Stuart Gardner, Noxapater; Traci Leigh Grantham, Vicksburg, associate minister to singles at Williams Blvd. Church, Kenner, La.; and Thomas W. Vowell Jr., minister to students at Handsboro Church, Gulfport.

Receiving other degrees were Sharon Russell Smith, Biloxi, bachelor of general studies; Jenny Lynn Bastin Vowell, wife of Thomas W. Vowell Jr., Handsboro Church, Gulfport, bachelor of general studies with a specialization in church education and theology; Billy Ray Little, Columbus, pastor of Orleanian Baptist Mission in New Orleans, bachelor of general studies with a specialization in biblical studies; James R. Gardner, Bassfield, pastor of Old Hebron Church, New Hebron, associate in Christian studies with a specialization in pastoral ministries; Rocky Lee Everett, pastor of Harmony Church, Picayune, associate in Christian studies; and Carol C. McElroy, Laurel, associate in Christian studies.

Southern graduates Miss'ans

Four Mississippians were among the 184 students awarded degrees from Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., during commencement exercises May 17.

Receiving the doctor of ministry degree was Randy Dewayne Bostick of Corinth.

Awarded the master of divinity in Christian education degree were: Robert Hudson Mullins of Brandon and Billy Thornton of Raleigh.

Receiving the master of social work degree was Pat Cummings of Mantee.

Keep government's hands out of collection plate, court says

ST. LOUIS (ABP) — Religious groups hailed a May 6 ruling by a federal appeals court that tithes given to a church cannot be seized to pay the debts of donors who later declare bankruptcy.

The 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed lower-court rulings that ordered Crystal Evangelical Free Church to turn over \$13,450 given by Bruce and Nancy Young during the year before they filed for bankruptcy.

The appeals court, in a 2-1 decision, said confiscation of the Minnesota couple's gifts would violate their free exercise rights.

The appeals court found no "compelling reason" to restrict the couple's religious exercise and said the lower-court ruling "substantially burdens" their exercise of religion, thus violating the 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

Religious leaders hailed the appeals court decision.

"Paying debts is important, but keeping the government's hand out of the offering plate is even more important," said Steven McFarland, director of the Christian Legal Society's Center for Law and Religious Freedom.

McFarland's organization filed three briefs in support of the church. Joining the CLS brief at the appeals court level were the Baptist Joint Committee, the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the National Association of Evangelicals, the Christian Life Commission, and the Traditional Values Coalition.

Southern Baptist spokesman Will Dodson called the decision "a victory for religious liberty."

The decision "certainly reduces the potential for the government to interfere with the operations of a church," said Dodson, director of governmental relations and legal counsel for the Christian Life Commission.

Baptist Joint Committee General Counsel Brent Walker said the court "applied RFRA the way it

should have, boldly and with teeth."

"I cannot imagine a more serious threat to religious liberty and church autonomy than for the government to raid a church's treasury to pay the claims of unsecured creditors," Walker said.

He added that government "simply has no compelling interest that would justify effectively nullifying an accomplished act of worship."

Kids' SS materials...

Teaching helps on SBCNet

NASHVILLE (BP) — Preschool Sunday School teachers looking for some extra helps in working with kindergartners and pre-first-graders may find what they're looking for in some new electronic files now available on SBCNet.

Ideas for additional activities for these groups are being posted monthly as electronic text files in the Preschool/Children's Library in the General Ministry A forum on SBCNet. Southern Baptists' private area on the CompuServe computer network. They supplement those already included in Preschool Bible Teacher C, the Life & Work Series teacher book for 4-, 5-, and preschool 6-year-olds.

Files are posted one month in advance of the date of the lessons. For example, the file of helps designed to supplement June Sunday School lessons was posted May 1.

Carole Hallum, a biblical stud-

ies designer in the Baptist Sunday School Board's Bible teaching-reaching division, said the helps are being prepared by preschool curriculum writers and are targeted to the special needs of kindergartners and pre-first graders.

Gayle Lintz, a preschool curriculum writer from Waco, Texas, said these two groups are literal-minded, active learners who need "hands-on" experience. "They show us that they are unique creations of God and they learn in their own individual ways."

SBCNet can be accessed by using a computer, modem and a membership kit distributed free by the Sunday School Board. To order a kit, or for more information, call (800) 325-7749. Persons who are already members of CompuServe may join SBCNet by simply typing "GO SBCNet" at any CompuServe prompt.

Homecomings

Unity, Pascagoula: June 16; covered dish dinner; Sam Jones, former pastor, guest speaker; Ray Spence, pastor.

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Church, Fort Worth; and Paul Griffin Jones III of Clinton were granted the master of divinity with biblical languages degree.

Jarred Sean Parnell of Greenwood was granted the master of divinity degree.

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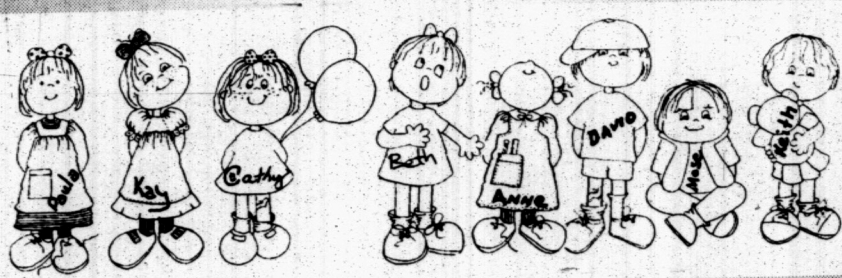
HOUSE TOPS

Matthew 10:27 NAS

June 13, 1996

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

The Toward 2000 Faculty says



"You do the most important job in the world--helping children and their families grow in Christian faith."

THE FACULTY WILL HELP YOU:

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September 13-14, 1996
Gulfshore Baptist Assembly

A two-day conference for volunteer and professional preschool and children's leaders in the local church.

\$36.50 per person--room and meals

\$6.50 per person--program fee

\$3.00 commuter fee

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address			
city	state	zip	
contact person			
no. males	no. females	no. couples	
total reservations			
Accommodations Desired: <input type="checkbox"/> 2 per room <input type="checkbox"/> 3-4 per room			
Telephone: (601) 452-7261 Fax: (601) 452-7263			

Send a total of \$43 per person with reservation form to:
Frank Simmons, Manager
Gulfshore Baptist Assembly
100 First Street
Pass Christian, MS 39571-3299

Celebrating the Family

(30 Year Anniversary)
July 1-5, 1996
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- **Single Parenting** - Renee Coates Scheidt, Pearl River, La. - recently married widow, author, recording artist
- **Youth (Mini-Centrifuge)** - Ronney Joe Webb, FBC, Laurel
- **Children "TeamKid"** - Barbara Brown, Jackson
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- **Family Perspective (Adventure Recreation)** - Ronney Joe Webb
- **Family Olympics**
- **Giant Cookout** - July 4th
- **Free Day for the Family (Wednesday)**

Note: Pastors or staff who bring three families will get one adult's expenses paid!!!

Acteens Weekend

June 21-23, 1996
Camp Garaywa

Registration begins Friday, June 21 at 5:30 p.m.
Program ends Sunday, June 23 at noon

Name of Acteen	_____
Grade completed	_____
Address	_____
Phone Number	_____
Church	_____

Amount enclosed: _____
Cost: \$50 - includes 5 meals, 2 nights lodging and program fee.
Deadline for registration is **JUNE 19!**

Make checks payable to WMU

Mail to:

WMU-Acteens Weekend, P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205

COST PER PERSON

Room and Meals	
Class "A" Accommodations	
(2 per room)	
Adult (12 years old and above)	\$150.40
Child (2-11)	\$73.60
Baby (under 2)	\$3.00
Class "C" Accommodations	
(3 or more per room)	
Adult	\$138.20
Youth (12 years old-12 grade)	\$76.60
Child (2-11 years old)	\$43.30
Baby (under 2)	\$3.00

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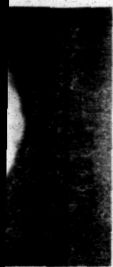
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Lance Crocker
Tennessee
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Karen Cross
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Delta State



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Leigh Hughey
Colorado
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Kentucky
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Hope Weaver
Pacific Northwest
Delta State



Kevin Wiggins
Indiana
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and Make

Disciples



JULY

The number indicates the day of the month and the year. For example: 2-83 is July 2, 1983

- 2-83 — Miss Alaina C. Baker, P O Box 4475, Dowling Park, FL 32060; Parents: Kenneth & Lynn, Dentistry: SERVE IN IVORY COAST, AFRICA
- 2-83 — Miss Sarah E. Metts, Lynx Air/Sd Dr., P. O. Box 407052, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33310; Parents: Joe Jr. & Angela, General Evangelism, SERVE IN DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
- 4-83 — Miss Tabitha S. Fox, UEC Baptists of Ukraine, 3-a, L. Tolstogo St., Kiev, 4, 252004, UKRAINE; Parents: Thomas & Tammy, General Evangelism
- 11-83 — Mr. Benjamin Jones, 4 bix, Grandé Rue, 54420 Saulxures-les-Nancy, FRANCE; Parents: Mike & Pam, General Evangelism
- 11-87 — Miss Andrea J. Hendricks, Apartado 1010-7050, Cartago, COSTA RICA; Parents: Larry & Mary, General Evangelism
- 13-85 — Miss Rachel L. Graves, Casilla 1417, Concepcion, CHILE; Parents: Edgar & Marilyn, General Evangelism
- 17-82 — Miss Courtney C. Hammack, 169 Boundary St., Kowloon, HONG KONG; Parents: Duane & Sandy, Social Ministry
- 17-80 — Miss Hannah Song, 431 Tee Street, Biloxi, MS 39532; Parents: Woong Ho & Sook Ja, Field Personnel Assistance
- 20-87 — Mr. Andrew F. Bailey, 116 Church St., Centerville, GA 31028; Parents: Alvin & Elizabeth, Music Promotion.
- 20-87 — Mr. Max Hutchinson, P.O. Box 413, Long Beach, MS 39560-5324; Parents: Michael & Lynn, Church Planters, SERVE IN WEST AFRICA
- 20-93 — Mr. Christopher L. Curtis, B.P. 130, Tenkodogo, BURKINA FASO; Parents: Clifton F. & Cathy P., Agriculture
- 21-82 — Miss Emily F. Parker, 107 Frederick Street, Brandon, MS 39042; Parents: Jeffrey & Shiela, General Evangelism, SERVE IN UNITED KINGDOM
- 25-75 — Mr. Richard Aubrey Massey, Mississippi College, P.O. Box 4657, Clinton, MS 39058; Parents: Greg & Karen, SERVE IN ARGENTINA
- 26-78 — Mr. Vincent C. Johnston, Caixa Postal 2053 Jockey, 64.049-970 Teresina, PI, BRAZIL; Parents: Vincent & Sharon, Conference/Encampment
- 30-80 — Mr. Nathan C. Collins, c/o ACS Suriname, P. O. Box 02-5567, Miami, FL 33102-5567; Parents: Charles & E. Suzanne, General Evangelism
- 30-82 — Miss Ashley N. Pevey, RVA, Box 80, Kijabe, KENYA; Parents: Frank & Beth, Mission Administration, SERVE IN TANZANIA

Gulfshore Music Leadership Conference Gulfshore Baptist Assembly July 11-13, 1996

*"Fill me with your music, Lord
sing your song through me"*

Innovative! That's what this conference will be. It promises to be filled with useful information for all aspects of church music, worship leadership, keyboard, instrumental, preschool/children, handbells, choirs.

Plus concerts will be given by ONE VOICE, Joseph Martin and Glenn Crosthwait

Look for more information in the mail or in **House Tops** on this exciting conference, or contact the Church Music Dept. at 1-800-748-1651 or locally at 968-3800.

STEPS IN THE CHURCH PLANNING PROCESS

- ✓ Elect and train the Church Leadership Team (Church Council).
- ✓ Resource: Church Leadership Team Handbook Product number 5201-18, Baptist Sunday School Board
- ✓ Order Church Design Handbook, 1996-97, (601) 968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651.
- ✓ Review or write your church Mission Statement.
- ✓ Select a few Priority Concerns for 1996-97.
- ✓ Set a few measurable goals for 1996-97.
- ✓ Correlate your church Calendar for 1996-97.
- ✓ Build your church budget for the new year.
- ✓ Present your plans to church for approval.

RESOURCES: 1996-97 Church Design Handbook, Church Administration Magazine, May 1996

Let's pray this day ...

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SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY SATURDAY

*"More Things are wrought by Prayer than this World dreams of.
Wherefore let thy Voice rise like a Fountain night and day."*

— Alfred Lord Tennyson

14 Church Music Leadership Conference, June 15-21, Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center.

15 a VBS team to Venezuela June 15-28. They will be conducting VBS for missionary children during annual mission meeting.

16 fathers on Father's Day that they will know how to relate to their children in love and pray that children will show appreciation to their fathers.

17-21 the V Youth Conference Gulfshore Assembly, sponsored by MBCB; for RA/Challenger Camp, Central Hills, sponsored by Brotherhood, for GA Summer Camp, Camp Garaywa, sponsored by WMU.

18 the 1996 National Campers on Mission Rally - 25th Anniversary, LeFlore County Civic Center, Greenwood, MS, June 18-21. Mississippi volunteers will host over 600 members from US and Canada.

19 Ken and Mattie McLemore, missionaries in Kishnev, Moldova, as they learn the Moldovan language.

20 African American Fellowship, Grace Temple Baptist Church, Gulfport, June 20, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., sponsored by Missions Extension & Associational Administration Dept.

21 Acteens Weekend, Camp Garaywa, 5:30 p.m., 21st-noon, 23rd, sponsored by WMU. For VI Youth Conference, Gulfshore Assembly (21-25) sponsored by MBCB.

22 the churches in Moldova. About half of them do not have buildings to meet in. Many villages and towns have no churches.

23 political stability in the Moldovan government and for the president of the Moldovan Baptist Union who has experienced severe health problems.

24 a team of nine from Parkway Baptist Church, Clinton, as they lead VBS for missionary children in Honduras. Pastor Ken Anderson will lead the Bible study for the missionaries' annual meeting.

25 the Gambling Ministry Conference, FBC, Clinton, 1:30-9 p.m., sponsored by Missions Extension & Associational Administration Dept. For the Youth Musicians Conference, Gulfshore Assembly (25-29) sponsored by the Church Music Dept.

26 Lee Deng Hui, the first president to be elected by the people to lead the Republic of China on Taiwan. He is a dedicated Christian who claims to seek the Lord's guidance daily in his decision making role.

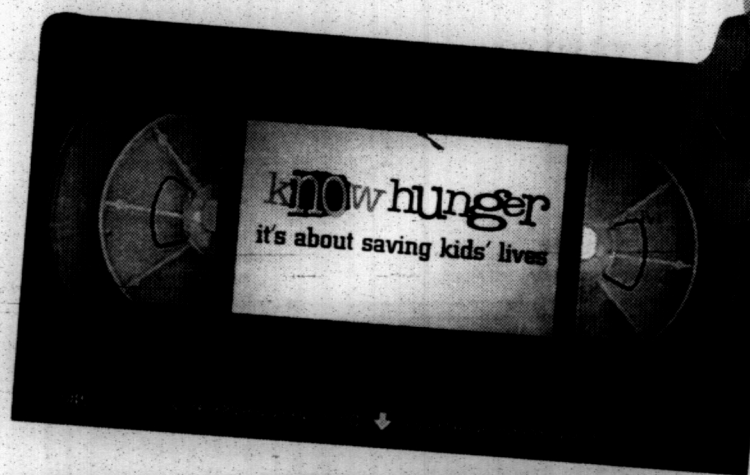
27 the Gambling Ministry Conference at 15th Avenue BC, Meridian, 1:30-9:00 p.m., sponsored by Missions Extension & Associational Administration Dept.

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35,000 kids die of hunger and hunger-related causes every day. And now **your group** can do something about it! Because once the members of your group know about hunger in our world, they can help fight it. And save kids' lives. That's what the World Vision 30 Hour Famine is all about. It's an exciting quest to **know hunger**—one that can have a profound influence on your group. The Famine is easy to do. And it's fun! So call today for your **free video**. It's your group's first step to **know hunger**.



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- ☐ I'm not ready to sign up yet. But I do want to know more about the 30 Hour Famine. Please send me the free video.

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Organization Name (City)

Address

City State Zip

Daytime Phone ()

Evening Phone ()

This is a ☐ home ☐ organization address.
(If possible, we'd prefer the organization address.)

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Official 1997 NATIONAL Famine dates, February 21 & 22 • But your group can do it anytime! **Just do the Famine!**

Names in the News



Members of First Church, Collins, presented to **John R. Sapp**, (left) pastor, a 1995 Ford Taurus as a token of their appreciation for him on Dec. 31. An additional cash amount was given, which was taken up over and above the purchase price of the car. Sapp has served First Church since July of 1993. Billy Todd (right) is chairman of deacons.



Concord Church, Booneville, recently honored **Clytie Roberts** (left) for her long years of service to the church. She has been a leader in every aspect of the ministry of the church for over 35 years. Robert Walker, pastor, presented Roberts with a silver tray while her children and grandchildren looked on.

Kathy Bearden, BSU director at Mississippi Baptist Medical Center, Jackson, is retiring after

39 years of service to the hospital. A retirement tea will be held in her honor on Friday, June 21, from 2-4 p.m. in the private dining room of Mississippi Baptist Medical Center.

Mr. and Mrs. David N. Mayhall will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary at a reception on June 15 from 2-4 p.m. at First Church, Magee. The Mayhalls are retired missionaries to West Africa.

Timothy Penrose, a student at the Southern Baptist Educational Center, Olive Branch, was one of ten students who were named Outstanding Scholars by the Southern Baptist Association of Christian Schools. Criteria for their selections, according to John R. Chandler, executive director of the association, include SAT and ACT scores, grade point average, Christian character student activities, church activities, and leadership.

FORT WORTH (BP) — Craig Bird, a former Southern Baptist missionary to Africa, has been named director of public relations/news and information at Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, effective June 10.

Pineview Church, Clinton, licensed **Jerry L. Pitts** to the gospel ministry on May 19. Neel Grantham, pastor, presented the certificate to Pitts.

Brian Gates of Hillcrest Church, Jackson, has announced his surrender to the ministry. He is available to supply in the pulpit. His address is 910 Reaves St., Jackson, MS 39204, or phone 372-3593.

Keith Stephenson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Stephenson of Jackson, will be honored for 10 years of service on June 16 at First Church, Prattville, Ala., where he

is minister to students. Stephenson is married to the former Pat Robinson of Brandon.

Paul H. Leber Sr., pastor of Oak Grove Church in Neshoba Association, is observing the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the ministry which occurred at First Church, Doylestown, Pa., his home church. He pastored churches in South Carolina and Texas during and following his college years at Columbia Bible College and the University of South Carolina, and his training at Southwestern Seminary. Other churches he pastored in Mississippi were First Church, Purvis, East Moss Point Church, and High Hill Church, Neshoba Association. He retired in 1983 while serving as pastor in Reisterstown, Md.

Leber

Samuel Gore, a sculptor and educator at Mississippi College, has captured the attention of **Christianity and the Arts**, a Chicago-based magazine promoting Christian arts expression. Gore's unique artistry features the development of his sculpture into a performing art, notes Marci Whitney-Schenck, editor and publisher. Gore reviewed some of the experiences that led him to this unique ministry in the article "Samuel Gore on Gore: A Sculptor's Faith Journey," which appears in the magazine's current "Men of Faith" issue.

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Keeping us informed

Editor:

Please continue to use articles from the Associated Baptist Press (ABP). The ABP was organized by state editors like (**Baptist Record** editor emeritus) Don McGregor because many felt that Baptist Press was biased and limited.

Since Mississippi Baptists need to be well-informed about Baptist life we need all of the information from various news sources that we can gather. It is better to make informed decisions than uninformed ones.

Baptists can hear facts and feelings and then personally and cooperatively act according to God's leadership in their lives without the direction of some other appointed authority.

Providing news from ABP does not give a free ride to any group

Revival Dates

Union, Sardis: June 23-26; 7 p.m.; Mike Smithy, evangelist; James McPhail, music; Bob Hick-ey, pastor.

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Jon Doler
Leland

Vacation Bible Schools

Liberty, Flowood: June 17-21; 6:30-9 p.m. for ages 4 to 6th grade; John R. Cofer, pastor.

Calvary, Durant: June 17-21; ages 4-13; 9 a.m.-12 p.m.; pre-registration will be Sunday, June 16, from 6-7 p.m.

Oak Grove, Smithdale: June 17-21; 6:30-8:30 p.m.; commencement, June 17.

Byram, Jackson: June 23-28; 6:30-9 p.m.; Preparation Day, June 22, 10 a.m.

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Just for the Record

Trinity Church, Carthage, will present Sid Buckley in a vocal concert June 14 at 7:30 p.m. Buckley, a Mississippi native and chairman of the music division of New Orleans Seminary, will be accompanied by Matt Tisdell, minister of music at Trinity Church. There will be a potluck supper at 6 p.m. Bill Stout is pastor.

The 1996 Mississippi Baptist All-State Youth Choir on tour will present concerts at the following churches in Mississippi: First Church, Hattiesburg, June 12, 6:30 p.m.; First Church, Booneville, June 17, 7 p.m.; and Alta Woods Church, Jackson, June 18, 7 p.m. The choir is directed by Richard Joiner of Mississippi College and the instrumental ensemble is directed by David Young of William Carey College.

Southern Cross will be the

featured guests in a quarterly singing at **Calvary Church, Durant**, June 15, 7 p.m.

Beulah Church, Lexington, will host a tabernacle seminar, "Pictures of Christ in the Tabernacle," on June 13-15 at 7 p.m. The speaker will be James Lee of Spanish-Lake Church, St. Louis, Mo. He will assemble a scale model of the Old Testament tabernacle as he speaks. The music will be presented by the Lee Family Singers. Douglas L. Lawson is pastor.

First Church, Laurel, is conducting "First Call, A Summons to Spiritual Awakening," each Monday in June at 7 p.m. Speakers for the June 17 and June 24 services are Brian Harbour, pastor of First Church, Richardson, Texas; and Jimmy Porter, pastor of First Church, McComb, respectively.

Uniform Live faithfully



By David Mitchell
James 2, 5

The approach to faith, works, and salvation presented in the book of James has been a battlefield of continuing controversy. Passages such as this should not be discarded or ignored because they are difficult to interpret. Rather, they are of tremendous benefit because they force one to hammer out his or her own personal theology.

If Scripture is difficult to understand or one does not agree with another's position, the goal should be to come to a point of settling with oneself a position birthed from Scripture. Such is the case with the meaning of James' statement, "Faith without works is dead" (2:17).

It is apparent that Paul and James approached faith and works from two different arenas. They were writing for two specifically different audiences. One needs to see that James was talking about discipleship. He was speaking to the saved and was pastoral in his writing. He was talking about the fruits of faith.

Paul, on the other hand, was speaking primarily to a lost audience. His emphasis was missionary in nature and he spoke of putting down the roots of salvation. James wanted the disciples to know that an inward faith is not all that matters. He did not teach a "works" salvation, but taught that works grow out of a faith born in salvation.

James drew from a worship service, giving an illustration to which his original audience could relate. "Depart in peace," was a special blessing pronounced at the close of the observance of the Lord's supper in the early church. The pronouncement alone was of no value (v. 16). For this passage to have meaning to those worshippers who were cold or hungry, the pronouncement must be accompanied by a blanket or a meal.

Illustrating from another common life situation, James drew from the fact that faithful Jews professed to believe in one God. A Jewish father would teach his son as soon as the child could begin to speak the words, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord" (Deut. 6:4). The belief and teaching that God is one is good, but the statement alone does not put a person in a right relationship with God. This knowledge is even held by demons (v. 19).

James was stating emphatically that a genuine faith would move a person to action (v. 21). One sure way of knowing that we have salvation is by the movement of the Holy Spirit to produce the fruits of the Spirit, which in turn produces good works.

Rahab is mentioned in Hebrews 11:31 as one who, "by faith... did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given friendly welcome to spies." The inclusion of Rahab and the comparison of her fate to that of Abraham's is important. It points out that God is in the purpose of saving sinners and that all who act obediently in true faith will have eternal life.

Three times, James mentioned the phrase "justified by works." When one is justified, he is made acceptable to God. When James said that a person is justified by his works, he was saying that this person had experienced the grace of salvation and the grace of salvation is seen by the deeds of his life as well as his words. Faith and works are not rivals nor enemies — they are best of friends, and go hand in hand, complementing each other.

At the conclusion of his letter (5:13-18), James instructed his readers to utilize faith and works through prayer. Here, faith is put to work and the faith that believes in the power of prayer is rewarded with a supernatural result. James spoke of a faith that is put to work through prayer, singing, praising, belief in the power of God and the promises of God.

Oil was often used as a medicine during the life of early Christians. They understood and knew that, though oil was applied, it must be accompanied by God's healing power. One might read this Scripture to say, "use the best medicines possible and pray earnestly." Here, James was saying that he had said throughout his letter: Do all you can to help those who are physically and spiritually sick (works), and above all, pray because the "effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (5:16).

Mitchell is pastor of Van Winkle Church, Jackson.

Bible Book Response to repentance



By Clayton Littlejohn
Joel 2, 3

God's response to his people's repentance demonstrates that God accepts and redeems those who turn to him in faith. This section is a wonderful pattern for Christians to follow today, which will lead us to a sweet relationship with Christ.

God's promise to restore the land (2:18-19). The word "then" in verse 18 represents the judgement that God sent by locusts, and also that he accepts the repentance of the people. In verses 12-17, God summarizes his call to repent, then in verse 18, he shows us that the land he designated and blessed for his chosen people is still precious to him and that he is jealous over it.

By his having pity on his people instead of destroying them, reassures them that he is keeping the covenant he made with their forefathers. In verse 19, God answers the request of the priest and honors their faithfulness. He reverses the plague of locusts by sending corn, wine, and oil in excess.

God's promise to pour out his Spirit (2:28-29). In this section God makes a promise to one day "pour out my spirit upon all flesh." This was practically fulfilled at Pentecost and was quoted by Peter in the sermon he preached on that wonderful day. It's God's spirit that convicts us of our sin, directs our paths, and enables us to perform the will of God. Spirit-filled Christians are God's method of spreading the glorious gospel. This is for Jews and Gentiles.

God's promise to deliver all who call on him (2:34). This phrase "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered" is very familiar to any student of God's Word. You find this phrase repeated in Romans 10:13. It is one of the verses used in leading someone to salvation via the Roman Road. This phrase also shows the way of salvation: "whosoever shall call." This is an act of faith on our part and an act of grace on God's part. It illuminates any "works" salvation that so many denominations are teaching today.

If you read in Acts 2 Peter's message on Pentecost, you will see that he, too, taught all you have to do is call on the Lord and believe. Following the believer's salvation, one then follows in baptism, but not for salvation. Baptism is symbolic of the death, burial, and resurrection. In the future, God will save a remnant from Mount Zion and Jerusalem. This is God's place of worship, and the place where his truth is revealed.

God's blessings for his people (3:16-21). In this section, God's power is revealed as he compares his destruction of Israel's enemies to that of a roaring lion. A lion roars after it has killed its prey.

God will then begin to shake the heavens and earth, an act which will show his omnipresence. He created the heaven and earth, so it would certainly be no problem for him to shake them up and once again display to the world his power.

Verse 17 refers to the day when Jesus will control his kingdom here on earth from Zion. Jerusalem will be holy because he has cast the false prophet and the Antichrist into the lake of fire, and will bind Satan for 1,000 years. God has and will again judge Edom and Egypt and in contrast he will bless Judah in that day (3:18). We have much to look forward to.

Littlejohn is pastor of Ingram Church, Baldwin.

Life and Work Be a good citizen



By Linda Donnell
Romans 13

Do I have to submit to governmental authority? In a time when some of the laws passed seem contradictory to our Christian principles, and when we observe governmental officials behaving in a manner in direct contradiction to biblical truths, how can we submit to and be supportive of our government?

Certainly Paul did not live in a day of perfect government. In fact, the church faced constant persecution at the hands of the Roman officials. Yet Paul offered positive rationale for governmental authority and for Christians to be good citizens.

Submit to government authorities (vv. 1-2). The apostle's counsel to submit to government is a commandment which runs throughout the New Testament (1 Tim. 2:1-2, Titus 3:1, 1 Peter 2:13-17). It was the consistent and official teaching of the Christian church that obedience must be given to and prayers made for the civil power — even when that power was unjust. In verse 2 Paul explained the basis for this demand: "The authorities that exist have been established by God." Consequently, those who rebel against the authority are in a sense rebelling against what God has instituted. In 1 Peter 2:13, we are told, "Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority." We can be great witnesses for Christ as we abide by our laws and show respect for our leaders.

As man is a part of the body of Christ, he is also part of the body of a nation. As such, he enjoys certain benefits and privileges which oblige him to certain duties and responsibilities as well. Even when we do not agree with government officials, as Christians patterning after Christ, we owe them a certain amount of respect. Perhaps if we spent more time in specific prayer for our governing officials, we might see a difference in their performance. How often do you spend time in deep and sincere prayer for the leaders of our country?

Obey the law (vv. 3-5). Because the ultimate purpose of governmental authority is to achieve good, Paul called for his readers to obey the law (vv. 3-4). If taken literally, this may be difficult for Christians in the face of evil in the governing body. We should read this entire section on being a good citizen in light of what was said in Romans 12:2 (NIV): "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is." Paul did not intend for the readers to simply follow every whim of the Roman empire. Sometimes human authority and the authority of God come into conflict. A Christian's first loyalty must always be to God (Acts 4:19).

Paul reminds Christians to obey the law — not just to avoid punishment, but because it is the right thing to do (v. 5). When the goal of achieving the good is linked to the appeal to conscience, then we can see the kind of discriminating ethical action which is called for at the beginning of Chapter 12.

Pay your taxes (vv. 6-7). At the time Paul was writing the Romans, there was a controversy over excessive taxes being levied by the government. Paul was most likely encouraging the church not to get involved in the agitation over the legitimacy of taxes. He explained that paying taxes is part of Christian responsibility: it shows recognition of government as God's servant. Our government may not be perfect; after all, it is made up of humans with all their imperfections. But the state in the hands of God works to preserve the world from chaos. Ideally, men should be bound together by Christian love; but they are not. The cement which keeps them together is the state. Paul called for Christians to work with God in using the state to bring order rather than chaos for the world. It is our Christian duty to help and not to hinder the process.

May we all commit to spending time in prayer for the U.S. government decisions, voters' decisions, national leaders, the media, the court system, that our nation will be lead on God's course. Our consistent prayers and active participation in our government can have an impact on the future of our nation.

Donnell is a member of First Church, Hattiesburg.

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capsules

SBTS LOSES 10 MORE FACULTY MEMBERS; ATTRITION RATE AT 59%: LOUISVILLE, Ky. (ABP) — The end of the spring semester at Southern Seminary brought to a close the employment of at least 10 full-time faculty members. With the 10, a total of 42 full-time faculty members have taken other positions, been forced to leave or retired since the fall of 1992, when Roy Honeycutt announced plans to retire as president of the school in Louisville, Ky. Three of the 42 departed faculty had come to the seminary since Honeycutt's retirement announcement. That is an attrition rate of 59% over four years, based on a listing of 66 faculty members in the seminary's 1992-93 student directory. The count of 42 includes only full-time professors and does not account for adjunct professors, senior professors, instructors, and other part-time faculty. A few of those who have resigned or retired from their full-time posts have continued to teach in adjunct or contract capacities, or as senior professors, a designation given some retirees.

FILM FEATURES BAPTIST BATTLE OVER WOMEN: NEW ORLEANS (ABP) — A Baptist battle over whether women can be pastors may be coming soon to a theater near you. *Battle for the Minds*, produced and directed by Hollywood filmmaker Steven Lipscomb, is scheduled for completion July 1. A rough cut of the 73-minute film will be screened for news reporters June 11 at the Southern Baptist Convention, where the issue has sparked controversy in the past. A 1984 SBC resolution declared women are excluded from pastoral leadership because the woman was the first to sin in the Garden of Eden. Still at least 50 Southern Baptist women serve as senior pastors. In recent weeks, Mark Coppenger, president of Midwestern Seminary, called women pastors "one of the raging, raging heresies and confusions of the day."

LEADERS TO RECOMMEND CHANGE IN MISSION STATEMENT TO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: NASHVILLE (BP) — A change in the wording of the mission statement in the Covenant for a New Century is to be recommended to the Executive Committee by the president of the Executive Committee, its chairman, and the chairman of the Program and Structure Study Committee. The trio announced May 30 they will recommend the Executive Committee, during its pre-convention meeting June 8 in New Orleans, amend the mission statement to include the phrase, "to the glory of God the Father." If the Executive Committee gives its approval to the amendment, it would, in turn, recommend it to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in New Orleans June 11-13. Paul Brady, pastor of the Ranch Acres Church, Tulsa, Okla., had expressed concern over the lack of notice given to God the Father in the mission statement. He made a motion at the 1995 SBC meeting calling for a correction which was referred to the Executive Committee. In its September 1995 meeting, the Executive Committee declined to act upon his motion.

MISSISSIPPI'S CAUSEY AMONG SBTS DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI: NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Four graduates of Southern Seminary will be honored as distinguished alumni at the 1996 Alumni and Friends Luncheon in New Orleans. The luncheon will take place Wednesday, June 12 at 1 p.m. in the Hyatt Regency Hotel, next to the Superdome. The honorees include: Glenn D. Armstrong, pastor of Beaver Dam Church, Beaver Dam, Kentucky; **Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board**; Barclay M. Newman, American Bible Society senior translation officer, Springfield, Mo.; and Norman L. Townsel, pastor, Pilgrim Church, Hamilton, Ohio. Causey has been executive director-treasurer of the Convention Board since 1989. He was also a pastor for over 30 years serving at Parkway Church, Jackson, and Poplar Springs Drive Church, Meridian. Causey earned the master of divinity degree from Southern Seminary in 1955. He also holds the bachelor of arts and doctor of divinity degrees from Mississippi College.

WMU AIDS PROJECT TOPS \$100,000 IN MONEY, ITEMS: BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Southern Baptists gave \$126,457 and 123,598 items to support local and global AIDS ministries through Woman's Missionary Union's second national ministry project, Project HELP: AIDS. Of the totals, \$17,461 and all of the items were donated by Southern Baptist churches to AIDS ministries in their communities and states. The remaining funds, \$108,996, were given through the WMU Vision Fund to support the House of Hope in Vitoria, Brazil, an AIDS hospice under the direction of Southern Baptist foreign missionary Karen Gray. The top 10 states in monetary contributions to the project, including monies donated to local and global ministries, are Kentucky, \$18,441; Alabama, \$14,094; Tennessee, \$10,799; South Carolina, \$9,807; Texas, \$9,755; Virginia, \$8,839; Georgia, \$8,775; Arkansas, \$7,208; Missouri, \$4,814; and **Mississippi, \$4,498**. The top 10 states in items donated are Georgia, 17,828; Texas, 15,663; Kentucky, 11,658; Arizona, 10,701; Alabama, 10,239; Tennessee, 9,464; Arkansas, 8,244; **Mississippi, 6,841**; Virginia, 5,269; and Missouri, 4,426. The items donated by churches have included a variety of things, including personal hygiene products, furnishings and appliances for hospices, and handmade quilts for children with AIDS.

Remembering Father's Day —

What's a Dad worth these days?

By Dave Dravecky

The fellow on the aisle, "Fred," was going through a messy divorce. He said he would love to get back together with his wife, but he knew that was not going to happen unless they both got some serious help. In the meanwhile, he's been trying to "be there" for his kids. He's in the business of putting on seminars, but he cancelled everything on his schedule so he could spend more time with his kids.

"I'm tired of this," he confessed. "I've been so focused on my work that I lost sight of my family. You know what really

blew my mind? Whenever I go to spend time with my kids, I tell them we can do whatever they want to do. I guess I was willing to compensate for the pain they were going through because of the divorce. My time with them is limited, so I wanted our time to be special. You know what they say? They say, 'Dad, we just want to go back into the back yard and sit down around the barbecue pit and cook hot dogs with you.'"

Fred was willing to do anything... and his kids thought the most important thing he had ever done for them was to build a back

yard fire pit, surrounded by a simple bench. When their family was intact, they would all sit on that little bench and cook hot dogs over the fire in the pit. That meant more to them than anything else their dad could do.

Why? Because their dad was with them, having fun. That's it.

"I've been looking at my life and realizing that all the 'important stuff' I've been doing doesn't amount to a hill of beans," Fred continued. "What really matters in life is going into the back yard and cooking hot dogs with my children..."

People talk about building memories. What father doesn't want to build lasting, positive memories with his children? Eventually, our kids are going to leave home, and the memories they carry with them will take on great importance. What will our kids say about us after they leave the nest and after we're gone? We don't have to do something spectacular to make a special memory for our kids. What we must do is to love them and be there 100% with them when they are present.

That's what it means to live out your worth as a man. That's how your kids will see the unbelievable worth that God has already built into you. Of course, should you mess up in this area of your life and lose your kids somewhere along the way, you won't lose your worth as a man — but believe me, you will make it a lot harder for your kids to believe in their own worth. You will have an even harder time convincing yourself of your own worth.

A man who understands his God-given worth and who lives it out is giving his kids the richest treasure imaginable. It's a lot easier than most of us think. We don't have to be supermen. We just have to let our kids know that we love them. We have to be with them, really be with them.

— Excerpted from *The Worth of a Man* by Dave Dravecky (Zondervan Publishing House, 1996).



LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.
Minister of Counseling
First Church, Jackson

What difference does religious affiliation make? If you're a child of God, that's all that matters.

records a homosexual relationship between King David and his friend Johnathan. Is that true?

Religious affiliation, like other affiliations, is "an association or connection with others." When a person affiliates with a particular religion, he takes on the religion's beliefs and values. The religious affiliation provides a "safe place" to which a person can turn in times of crisis and joy. You must be sure, however, that the religious group with which you are affiliated is pursuing the truth and not deception. Be careful when approached by cults or New Age believers, who often espouse the statement that you have made. Does your religious group look to the higher power of Jesus Christ, or is it controlled by a person or group of persons who expect followers to look to them rather than to the Lord of the universe? Hebrews 10:25 encourages us to meet together. The church was established to bring people of like belief together to worship God and strengthen each other. We were never meant to go it alone.

I read that the Old Testament

King David lamented over Johnathan's death by saying, "I grieve for you, Johnathan my brother; you were very dear to me. Your love for me was wonderful, more wonderful than that of women" (2 Sam. 1:26, NIV). The deep relationship that developed between these two men is recorded in 1 Samuel, chapters 18-20. We have become so "sexualized" in our culture that we believe close friends of the same sex must be homosexuals or lesbians, but men and women can share a deep love for a member of the same sex without a hint of homosexuality or lesbianism. Johnathan and David were willing to die for each other. They knew each other's strengths and weaknesses to the point that they were completely vulnerable to each other. This vulnerability allowed them to minister to each other in times of crisis and disappointment. David and Johnathan present a picture of the deepest possible friendship, but don't be misled into thinking such a friendship is homosexuality.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx
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SIH MAWH HBQI FXQM, Q JTAX VTX, HBTH
CTAHB MAHBQIH MQOFE AE ZYTZ?

UTVYE HMQ: HMYXHN

This week's clue: H equals T.

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark Twelve: Twenty-Five.

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